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LETTER DATED 12 MAY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to submit herewith a letter from the President of the Republic of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tudjman, addressed to you.

I would be grateful if you would provide for the distribution of this letter and the annex thereto as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 12 May 1993 from the President of the Republic of Croatia addressed to the Secretary-General

Almost 15 months have passed since the beginning of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) peace-keeping operation on the territory of the Republic of Croatia. Unfortunately not many of the goals set by the Vance plan, inscribed in your reports and confirmed by the relevant Security Council resolutions, were achieved. This is why I must address you once again and ask for further action with a view to strengthening and redefining the UNPROFOR mandate.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the great effort being made by the United Nations and its Member States, the Secretariat and the Security Council, as well as the valiant performance of the United Nations Protection Force and United Nations agencies. We deeply regret the loss of life of UNPROFOR soldiers and civilians in their noble task.

In my letter addressed to you on 19 March 1993 (S/25447), I stressed the overall Croatian position towards UNPROFOR and I urged the United Nations to take necessary steps for increasing UNPROFOR's efficiency and achieving all the major tasks of the Vance plan. With regard to the aforesaid, I would like to reaffirm the position of the Republic of Croatia and emphasize the following facts and new developments which we find vital to establishing a peaceful solution to the problems caused by the aggression against the Republic of Croatia, as well as the crisis in the entire area of the former Yugoslavia:

1. In the entire territory of the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) "all paramilitary, irregular or volunteer units or personnel [should] be either withdrawn from the UNPAs or if resident in them, be disbanded and demobilized" as soon as possible, as emphasized in the Vance plan (S/23280, annex III, para. 15 (d)). Currently the situation in the UNPAs is not in conformity with these provisions. Serbian militias are heavily armed and are continuously shelling Croatian civilian targets, including the ancient coastal cities of Zadar, Sibenik and Dubrovnik. Serbian militant nationalists in the UNPAs are using their military might not only for attacking Croatian civilian and military targets, but also to terrorize moderate Serbs who refuse to follow their radical policy. The process of demilitarization will also have a great positive impact on the peace process in the neighbouring Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. Croatia must be given the opportunity to immediately restore its governmental authority throughout the so-called "pink zones". I must emphasize the fact that these areas are not a part of the UNPAs and they are considered to be a temporary solution which Croatia had accepted on a voluntary basis. In your report S/24188 dated 26 June 1992, you stated that action should be taken "to ensure an internationally monitored, step-by-step, reintroduction of Croatian Government authority to an area currently controlled by Serb forces ..." Almost a year after the adoption of the resolution 762 (1992), which established the "pink zones", the Republic of Croatia is still waiting for UNPROFOR to actively help in achieving the aforementioned goal. Therefore I

urge the enaction of necessary steps for the restoration of Croatian governmental authority in the "pink zones".

3. It is essential to urgently start the process of returning the refugees to their homes. This is not only a political issue of the utmost importance but also an economic one. The endless tide of refugees is imposing a heavy burden on the Croatian economy. The Republic of Croatia has already submitted numerous documents to the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning this matter. However, I would like to stress once again that, at this moment, Croatia is sheltering more than half of a million refugees, of whom 250,000 are Muslims from the neighbouring Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In order to finally start the process of effectively achieving the aforementioned goals, allow me to point out the following necessary steps:

(a) Complete implementation of Security Council resolution 802 (1993) by means of firm measures aimed at expediting the negotiations conducted under the auspices of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia and as a first step in the process of demilitarization of all the UNPAs.

(b) Establishment of full UNPROFOR control of the international border between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), which is currently on the territory of UNPA East, as emphasized in Security Council resolution 769 (1992), thus strengthening the implementation of Security Council resolutions 757 (1992), 787 (1992) and particularly 820 (1993).

(c) Opening of the major transportation railway and road routes in the UNPAs, oil pipeline and power transmission lines, both as confidence-building measures and because of their logistical value for the forthcoming implementation of the Vance/Owen plan in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(d) Positioning international monitors on the border between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is adjacent to the UNPAs, as inscribed in your report S/24353 (paras. 21 and 22) in order to prevent military activities against these two Republics and to ease the implementation of the Vance plan in Croatia and Vance/Owen plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Vance plan for Croatia and the Vance/Owen plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina are the pillars of this process. The success of the peace operation in the Republic of Croatia is directly linked with the prospects for lasting peace in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and vice versa. While I have a full understanding of the interrelation of the existing peace process in these two Republics, the peace process in Croatia should not be postponed by the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but rather serve as a model for successful peace-keeping and peace enforcing in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The recent tragic clashes between Croatian and Muslim forces in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina show that any delay in the endorsement and, if necessary, enforcement of the peace plans, make the prospects for success even more complicated.

The Republic of Croatia especially commends Security Council resolution 815 (1993) which states that UNPAs "are integral parts of the territory of the Republic of Croatia". This is the essential foundation for building a comprehensive peace process in the area and a fact which must be recognized by all sides involved in the conflict on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

I would like to stress once again that the Republic of Croatia is looking at the peace process as the most desirable means towards achieving a comprehensive settlement of the crisis. It is not only crucial that all the sides participate in this process, but that they also recognize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the United Nations Member States in the area. We would like to see the minorities in the respective states in the region acting as a bridge towards peaceful cooperation, and not as the casus belli. With this in mind we would like to inform you that the Croatian Government has prepared a set of various confidence-building measures with the special aim of normalizing the situation in the UNPAs and gradually reintegrating these areas into the Republic of Croatia. In particular, I wish to draw your attention to the recently established State Council for the Normalization of Croatian-Serbian Relations and its activities. On the other hand those who continue their armed assault on cities, civilians or Croatian military or police forces should be aware of their responsibility and should find themselves eventually before international court dealing with war crimes.

Having in mind Security Council resolution 815 (1993), which extends the UNPROFOR mandate for an additional interim period terminating on 30 June 1993, it is our desire that our proposals be given serious consideration in reshaping the new UNPROFOR mandate. I fervently hope that the Republic of Croatia will not be put into the position to reconsider its decision to prolong the UNPROFOR mandate and would like to give you my assurances that we currently remain devoted to the peace process conducted under the auspices of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

(Signed) Franjo TUDJMAN
President of the
Republic of Croatia